The New Bloomfield, Pa. Times.

VOL. XI. NEW BLOOMFIELD, PA., TUESDAY, MAY 29, 1877. NO. 22.

THE TIMES.

An Independent Family Newspaper,

IS PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY BY

F. MORTIMER & CO.

Subscription Price.

Within the County, ... $1 25
" " " Six months, ... 75
Out of the County, including postage, 1 50
" " " six months " 85

Invariably in Advance!

☞ Advertising rates furnished upon application.

For The Bloomfield Times.

ROBERT'S MARK.

PERHAPS some of our readers are dissatified with their condition in life, and if so, may find some comfort in reading the following story.

Robert Hope and Samuel Hullins had lived neighbors for more than twelve years; and it is probable they would always have been on good terms, had not Samuel, who had served under Admiral Nelson, gained at Trafalgar a small pension, which he had paid for by the loss of one of his legs. This leg less, and this pension more, were for Robert a continual source of jealousy; he accused fate for having left him his two feet, and complained bitterly that he had not been able, as he said, to sell his legs at the same price with Hullins. Every time he went to pay his rent, he repeated grumblingly that his neighbor was very fortunate; that he was in a condition to meet his bills, since the king gave him a good pension; while he, poor fellow, had hard work to make both ends meet, without taking into the account his creditors.

Robert at first contented himself with making these reflections inwardly, but by degrees his dissatisfaction was expressed aloud, and became his habitual and favorite theme of conversation.

One week that his rent had fallen behind-hand, and he was sadly advancing towards the house of Mr. Tyler, in order to make his excuses for this delay, he met Neighbor Hullins, who was as regular as a clock in paying his rent, and had just been for that purpose.

The very sight of Samuel produced on Robert the effect of a fit of sickness; so, when he bowed in reply to the salute of Hullins, his glance singularly resembled that of a bull shaking his horns at a dog.

Arrived at the house of the proprietor, Hope did not fail to be reprimanded. The example of his neighbor was cited, who always paid punctually, and to the last penny.

"Yes, yes," murmured Robert; "some people are born with a silver spoon in their mouths. Hullins is very fortunate and I am not surprised that he pays punctually with such a pension."

"Hullins has a pension, it is true," replied Mr. Taylor; "but his infirmity is a heavy cross, and if you were afflicted with it, I should pity you much more.

"Not so," said Hope. "If I had been so fortunate as to lose a leg like him, twenty years ago, it would have been a productive day for me. I would sell all my limbs at the same price. Do you call his oak leg a heavy cross? I think his pension should render it light. The heaviest cross that I know of, is to be obliged to labor incessantly."

Mr. Taylor was a man of joyous humor, but a close observer. He had for a long time noticed the envious disposition of Robert, and resolved to convince him that the lightest cross might become heavy to a discontented mind.

"I see," said he to Hope, "that you are disposed to do nothing. Well! I will exempt you from this obligation to labor of which you complain so bitterly. If you think the cross of your neighbor, Samuel, so easy to bear, will you accept a lighter one, if I will engage to give you your rent?"

"That depends upon what kind of a cross it is," said Robert, anxiously, for he feared that the proposition would not be acceptable.

"This," said Mr. Taylor, taking a piece of chalk and tracing a white cross on Robert's jacket. "During the time that you wear this, I shall not demand a penny of your rent."

Hope thought, at first, that his landlord was jesting; but being assured that he spoke seriously, he exclaimed:

"By St. George! you may say that you have seen my last money, for I am willing to wear this cross all my lifetime."

Robert immediately went out, congratulating himself on his good fortune, and laughing all along the road at the folly of Mr. Taylor, who had let him off so cheaply from paying his rent.

He had never been so joyous as at the moment of returning home; as he found nothing to complain of, and his dog came to sit down at his feet without his punishing him for his familiarity.

As he seated himself on his arrival, his wife did not, at first, notice the white cross which he had on his shoulder; but having passed behind her husband to wind up the clock, she suddenly exclaimed, in a shrill voice:

"Why, Robert, where have you been? You have on your back a cross a foot long. You have been to to the tavern, and some drunkard among your friends has played you a trick to make you ridiculous. Get up and let me brush off this cross."

"Away!" exclaimed Hope, hastily; "my clothes do not need your brushing. Go knit your stockings, and let me alone."

"That shall not be!" exclaimed Mrs. Hope, in a voice more shrill. "I will not have my husband become the laughing-stock of the whole village, and if I tear your jacket to pieces, you shall not wear that ridiculous cross."

As she spoke thus, the wife attempted to brush Robert's shoulder; and the latter, who knew that resistance would be useless, walked off, shutting the door after him violently.

"What a fury!" muttered he, as he went away. "If she had been more gentle, I would have told her of my good fortune; but she does not deserve to know it."

"O! O! Robert," exclaimed old Fox, at the moment when Hope turned the corner of his house, "what is that white cross on your back?"

"Take care of your own clothes," insolently replied Hope, going on his way.

"Mr. Hope," said little Patty Stevens, the grocer's daughter, "stop one moment if you please, that I may rub out that great white cross you have on your shoulder."

"Go and sell your herrings, lazy girl," replied Robert, "and do not concern yourself about the passers-by."

The little girl, silenced, hastened to re-enter her mother's shop.

At this moment, Hope arrived at the house of the butcher, who was convessing on the threshold with his neighbor, the blacksmith.

"You are just the man I wanted," said the latter, stopping Robert; and he began to speak to him on business; but hardly had he commenced, when old Peggy Turton arrived, in her plaid gown and blue apron.

"Mercy! Mr. Hope," exclaimed she, taking up her apron, "what is that on your back?"

Robert turned to tell her to let him alone, but the blacksmith then perceived the mark made by Mr. Taylor.

"Heavens!" said he, laughing, "he might serve for a sign to White Cross."

"I suppose," said the butcher, "that his wife has marked him thus for fear of losing him."

Hope felt that there was for him but one method of escaping at the same time from the apron of Peggy, and the jokes of the butcher and blacksmith, so he hastened to leave the spot, not without some abusive language to his neighbors; but the cross had begun to weigh more heavily upon his shoulder than he had at first supposed.

The unfortunate Robert seemed destined this day to provoking encounters, for he had gone but a few steps when he found himself opposite the school-house. School was just out, and the scholars were at this moment issuing from the door, ready for any fun that might present itself. Hope was terrible uneasy, and imagined he already heard cries behind him. His fears were soon realized; he had scarcely passed the school-house door when a long shout was heard, and fifty scholars at least began to pursue him and point at him, throwing up their caps in the air.

"Look, look," exclaimed one; "there is a sheep marked for the butcher."

"Don't you see," replied another, "it is a crusader just setting out for Palestine."

And the shouting and laughter recommenced more loudly.

Hope became pale with anger; he turned like a cross dog pursued by children, and, perhaps, would have cruelly revenged himself on his young prosecutors, had not Mr. Johnson, the schoolmaster, suddenly appeared at the door of his house.

Robert advanced towards him, complaining of his pupils as being insolent. Mr. Johnson replied that he would not for the world encourage impertinence in them, but that the white cross which he had on his back might make wiser people than boys laugh.

"What is this cross to you?" replied Robert, crossly. "Is not my back my own property?"

The schoolmaster smilingly assented, and Hope went on his way. But the cross was growing heavier and heavier.

He began to think that it would not be so easy to pay his rent in this manner. So much raillery had already been heaped upon him, what would it be if the cause were known? His landlord might as well have written on his back a receipt in full.

As he reflected thus, Robert arrived at the tavern. He was passing by when he perceived Mr. Taylor himself at a few paces distance, and on the other side his neighbor Hullins, dragging his wooden leg, and conversing with Harry Stokes, the carpenter. Harry Stokes was the wit of the village, and Hope would not have encountered him before Hullins for the world. He therefore took refuge in the tavern.

But the place was not long tenable.—The drinkers did not fail to perceive the cross, and to rally Hope, who grew angry; the quarrel became violent, and the innkeeper, fearing some serious result, turned Roberts out of doors.

The latter had left home with the intention of examining some work which had been offered him in the neighboring village, but his mind had been so disturbed by old Fox, Patty Stevens, the blacksmith, the butcher, Peggy Turton, and the school-boys, that he resolved to return home, thinking that would be, after all, the most peacable place.

Have you ever seen, in the month of September, a young partridge, the last of the brood, fluttering along through the fields with a wounded wing? Such was Robert on his way to his home, at the other end of the village. Now he walked rapidly lest he should be overtaken, now slowly lest he should meet some one; now in the road, now in the fields, gliding behind the bushes, climbing the walls, and shunning glances like a gipsy who has stolen a chicken from a farmer's poultry-yard. At this moment, the white cross was an unsupportable weight.

At last he reached his dwelling, and this time hoped to find a little rest. But as soon as his wife perceived him she began to cry out:

"Are you not ashamed to come back as you went? Five or six of our neighbors have asked me if you had lost your senses! Quick, let me rub out that cross."

"Away, woman!" exclaimed Robert, exasperated.

"You shall not remain so, Hope; I will not have any one belonging to me so ridiculous. Take off that jacket! take it off this minute, I tell you!"

As she spoke thus, Mrs. Hope attempted to seize her husband's arm; but the latter rudely repulsed her. Mrs. Hope, who was not remarkable for patience, replied by a blow, and the result was a scuffle between the two, to the great scandal of the neighbors, who ran to separate them.

Everybody blamed Robert, who when he became calm, understanding that there was no hope of rest or peace for him otherwise, effaced the cross of his own accord.

The Monday following, he carried his rent early to the house of his landlord.

"Ah! ah! Robert," said Mr. Taylor, on perceiving him, "I thought you would soon repent of your bargain.—This is a good lesson for envious and impatient dispositions, who are incessantly complaining of God and of life. Remember this, Hope; he who has created us has proportioned our burdens to our strength. Do not complain of being less fortunate than others, for you know not the sufferings of your neighbor.—All crosses are heavy; the way to render them light is to bear them with patience, courage, and good will."

CLERICAL EMBARRASSMENTS.

AN EPISCOPAL clergyman in Connecticut relates a couple of incidents aptly illustrating the embarrassments under which gentlemen of the cloth are often placed, provided they are gifted with a keen appreciation of the humorous. Every one has felt a tendency on occasions of solemnity to laugh at the slightest incident calculated to provoke mirth, and the worthy rector of —— parish shares this feeling in common with his lay brethren. From his elevated position of course every movement among his hearers is noticeable, and he confesses that it often requires an effort to preserve a sedate countenance when witnessing the tricks of restless urchins or the actions of eccentric individuals.

The instances to which he refers as particularly amusing were due to the presence of dogs, which appear to have an unaccountable liking for churches.—During the early part of the services on a Sunday in Lent, a saucy-looking, frisky little cur slipped along up the main aisle, and encountered a hat just outside of the new pews. He first smelled of it cautiously, then nosed it around for a moment, and finally, picking it up in his mouth, shook it vigorously. By this time several persons had their eyes on the dog, and the sexton came tiptoeing up the isle in pursuit, while the owner of the hat seized his cane and poked at the animal. Finding his situation uncomfortable, the cur trotted leisurely up the aisle to the platform, thence along to and down a side aisle, shaking the hat all the way with evident satisfaction. The sexton summoned assistance, and an energetic but quiet chase was organized, so as not to disturb the services, to which, however, few in the congregation were now giving attention.

Nearly every face in the house was either lighted up by a smile or distorted by a grin, and the clergyman had a hard struggle to restrain his emotions as he witnessed the clever way in which the dog again and again dodged his pursuers, still clinging to the hat, which was by this time only a wreck of its former self. Finally, the cur made his escape through an opened door, and order was restored. But the climax, of the clergyman at least, came a moment later, when, in continuing his reading, he encountered a warning reference to dogs—Matthew, xv., 26. In running his eye down the page he fortunately detected it before the words came to his lips, and like a flash the thought occurred to him that to read this, after what had happened, could not fail to provoke merriment both on his own part and that of his hearers. As the best course out of the dilemma, therefore, he skipped the objectionable sentence, and none of his hearers suspected the true reason of his strange expression of countenance and faltering tone at the time. He had conquered, but not wishing to endure a second trial, gave the sexton rigid orders for the future concerning dogs.

Only a few weeks afterward, however, and while the affair above related was still fresh in his memory, another adventure of the same nature occurred.—A country couple came into the city to be married, and the service was performed in the church. Accompanying the couple was a brother of the bridegroom, who brought a dog with him, the groom having one also, and both having escaped the notice of the sexton. The brother seated himself in a front pew, and undertook the task of keeping both dogs quiet. At first they were in the aisle, but eventually the brother lured his own dog into the pew, and placing the animal's head between his knees, held him fast. Then he endeavored to entice the other into the pew by snapping his fingers softly and uttering low whistles, all of which the clergyman could not avoid noticing. The stray animal would come as far as the pew door, but then, seeing the scrape in which his companion had become involved by overconfidence, would turn tail and trot away. Then followed a renewal of the whistling and finger-snapping, until at last the clergyman could endure it no longer, and cutting the ceremony as short as possible, fled to a side room where he could give vent to his feelings. He says that since these two affairs he has never ventured to proceed with a service when a dog was any where in sight, for it would be impossible for him to keep his mind concentrated on his duties.—EDITOR'S DRAWER, in *Harper's Magazine for June.*

Cleaning a Quaker Meeting House.

Dr. H——, one of the skilled physicians of old-time Philadelphia, was a member of the Society of Friends, though not always strictly obedient to their rules. He was called on at one time by a committee of the "Meeting," who expostulated with him upon his want of conformity in some respect. He heard them patiently, and in silence, and then said:

"Friends, I have had a dream which I would like to tell you."

They agreed to hear him, and the old gentleman proceeded:

"I dreamed that the whole Society of Friends were collected in our great meeting house, and attending to the business of the Church. The subject under discussion was the filthy condition of the meeting house, and the means of cleansing it. Many plans were proposed and discussed by the prominent members, who sat in the upper seats, but none seemed likely to answer the purpose, until one little man who occupied a seat on the floor of the house, and had not taken part in the discussion, got up and said: "Friends, I think that if each one of us would take a broom and sweep immediately around his own seat, the meeting house would be cleaned."

A good lesson for every one. Improvements may go abroad, but should begin at home. Let each man improve himself, and he will be better fitted to improve others.

A Fish Story.

Land and Water relates the following, concerning a remarkable battle, lasting for sixteen hours, between a plucky sportsman and an obdurate salmon, before the latter was conquered: "On Friday, 4 P. M., Mr. Crawshay hooked a fish below Houghton Castle, but did not land him till Saturday morning, the 24th inst., at 8 A. M. Immediately after being hooked, the fish went down the river, taking out upwards of one hundred yards of line. The water being strong and the fish determined, it was impossible to get him back. A wood by the water-side made it equally impossible for Mr. Crawshay to follow his fish, and so things remained untill a boat was brought at daylight the next morning from some distance, by which means the wood was passed and the fish at last landed on a gravel bed, in the presence of many spectators, some of whom had passed the night with the angler. The fish was a splendid male, forty inches long, and twenty-two inches girth; weight, 25½ pounds.

Strike the Knot.

"Strike the knot!" said a man one day to his son, who, tired and weary, was leaning on his axe over a log he had in vain been trying to cleave. Then, looking at the log, the man saw how the boy had hacked and clipped all round the knot without hitting it. Taking the axe, he struck a few sharp blows on the knot, and split the log without difficulty.

Smiling, he returned the axe to his son, saying, "Always strike the knot." That was good advice. It is good for you, my children, as it was to the boy to whom it was first given. It is a capital maxim to follow when you are in trouble. Have you a hard sum to do at school?" Have you got to face the difficulty? Are you leaving home for the first time to live among strangers?—Strike the knot! Look your trouble in the eye, as the bold lion hunter looks in the face of a lion. Never shrink from a painful duty, but step up to it and do it. Yes, strike the knot, boys and girls, and you will always conquer difficulties.

☞ What is the use of crying over spilled milk? It only makes it more watery.